

---

**OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE**  
**INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM**

---

**TO:** FIRST LADY MELANIE MUSGROVE  
**FROM:** KELLY RILEY  
**SUBJECT:** STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES: ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS  
**DATE:** MARCH 21, 2000  
**CC:** FILE

---

I recently met with Eloise Johnson Richardson of the State Board for Community and Junior Colleges (hereinafter referred to as the Board) to discuss the board's literacy programs. I have summarized her information for your reference in developing your literacy and reading initiative.

The State Board has statutory responsibility for administering adult education programs for adults with skills at or below the high school level. The U.S. Department of Education provides formula-based funding (based on the last census) to Mississippi to support Adult Basic Education. According to Mrs. Richardson, Mississippi received \$4.6 million last year to serve the 540,000 adult Mississippians without a high school diploma. More than 39,000 Mississippians participated in the board's programs last year.

The Board's adult education program offerings include basic education, GED preparation, English as a second language, family literacy, workplace education/basic skills, homeless adult education, housing authority literacy (Gateway Grants), and corrections literacy. A brief description of these follows:

- **Adult education** classes provide opportunities for adult learners to improve skills in reading, writing, mathematics and communication. After diagnostic testing to identify individual needs is conducted, an individualized education plan is designed to help learners reach their goals. Instructional methods include one-on-one tutoring, small group, computer-assisted, and large group instruction. Classes are held at 45 locations, including community and junior colleges, public schools, community centers, churches, libraries, Head Start centers and housing projects.
- The Board's **GED Preparation** program offers classes in pre-GED and GED preparation. Students may work independently or in groups, studying the five areas of the GED: literature and the arts, writing skills, social studies, science and mathematics. The board's adult education program offers placement testing to help students determine if they are ready to take the GED.

- **English as a second language** instruction provides non-English speaking people with the language skills needed to succeed in other education programs and to effectively meet the challenges in their daily lives. Learners improve skills in speaking, reading, writing, and listening to English. Classes are usually offered at different levels: beginning, intermediate and advanced.
- **Family literacy** integrates adult literacy instruction and early childhood education for undereducated families. Parents receive training in adult education, while the children attend a pre-school program. During planned times, parents work with their children in classrooms. These programs are operating in cooperation with local community-based groups, libraries, Even Start programs, Head Start agencies, HUD agencies, and other organizations throughout the state.
- Through the Board's adult education programs and Skill/Tech Centers in each community college district, the **workplace education/basic skills program** enables business and educational leaders to design programs to train citizens in the skills they need to excel and advance in the workplace. Mrs. Richardson mentioned that her office works in conjunction with DECD to go in on "rapid response" when a plant closing is announced in order to assess employees' skills and to assist employees in identifying potential jobs. The Employment Security Commission also visits the tech centers to recruit program participants for jobs.
- **Homeless adult education** was originally funded with federal discretionary funds from the U.S. Department of Education. The program targeted low-literate adult members of homeless families and provided educational services, life skills, parenting skills and basic communication skills. After federal funding ended, the Salvation Army gave \$100,000 to continue the program at eight sites in Jackson. There are additional sites around the state.
- The Board provides **Gateway Grants (Housing Authority Literacy Projects)** to housing authorities for adult education programs and activities. Most public housing authorities coordinate with the local adult education program in their area, with the adult education program providing materials and instructors and the housing authority providing the facility and utilities. This alleviates the transportation barrier for students.
- The Board provides literacy, basic skills training and GED preparation through its **corrections literacy program** to incarcerated individuals in city and county jails, as well as state prisons, community work centers and pre-release centers. Through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, the Board provides an innovative curriculum entitled "Life Skills for Prisoners," which offers instruction in employability skills, personal development skills and independent living skills.

I will be happy to obtain additional information on any of these programs for you.